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Citation

Singapore Management University. Singapore Management University Undergraduates do Community Service as part of Curriculum. (2001). SMU Press Releases.

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PRESS RELEASE

Singapore Management University Undergraduates Do Community Service as part of Curriculum

In its aim to develop holistic and well-rounded graduates, the Singapore Management University (SMU) has built in an 80-hour community service requirement as part of its core curriculum for its undergraduate programmes, the Bachelor of Business Management and the Bachelor of Accountancy.

A first for local universities, SMU believes that this internship stint will educate students on the importance of volunteerism and being responsible and civic-minded members of society. The students may select their preferred Volunteer Host Organisations (VHOs) with which to serve their two-week internship. SMU is working in partnership with the National Volunteer Centre (NVC) to help the students identify suitable volunteering opportunities in these organisations which span a wide range of different sectors, from the arts, environment, heritage and sports, to name a few.

To introduce students to the idea and concept of volunteerism, SMU has arranged a series of talks at NVC and the National Council of Social Service (NCSS), as well as tours to selected VHOs in the month of February. February is also the month dedicated to public education in this International Year of Volunteers which NVC is promoting.

Prof Janice Bellace, President of SMU, says: "At SMU, we believe that a good education is more than just instilling knowledge, it is also about shaping responsible and socially conscious individuals. Our close partnership with NVC and NCSS means that our students are able to undertake community service in an area which interests them, whether it is the arts, youths, health, the environment, and so on. We hope that through community projects, the students will contribute back to the society what they have received in the form of a good education."

Mrs Tan Chee Koon, Executive Director of NVC adds: "NVC is delighted to facilitate SMU's move. We are a firm believer in our youths, and know that they can be motivated to give of their best to community work if we start them right."

Today, a group of SMU students will be attending a talk at NVC before proceeding to visit the Singapore Philatelic Museum (SPM) for an introduction to volunteering opportunities there. Mr Lim Boon Tien, Head, Education & Public Communication of SPM is delighted with this SMU scheme. He says: "We hope that the volunteers can gain something through their volunteer service at our museum. Currently, we are working on two community projects with student volunteers of SMU who have taken up

the challenge of hosting visitors from certain welfare homes at the museum. The programmes are planned by the volunteers, using their ideas, skills and even contacts to create a meaningful experience for the guests. This way, they play a critical role in shaping their volunteer experience - we hope it will be an enriching one for them."

Other VHOs being visited by the SMU students in batches over this month of February include the Kwong Wai Shiu Hospital, Singapore Zoological Gardens, Singapore Discovery Centre, Ren Ci Hospital and Sculpture Square.